



**Townsend Council Workshop Meeting Minutes  
January 20, 2021 @ 7:00 pm  
VIA CONFERENCE CALL**

Per the Governor's request, all scheduled meetings will be held via electronic means. Residents will be able to view documents posted to the meeting tab on the Town website at [www.townsend.delaware.gov](http://www.townsend.delaware.gov) or by joining the meeting via computer.

Those wishing to attend may dial 1(301)715-8592. When directed, provide following meeting ID 82764217575# and then the following password 361631# to enter the meeting.

If you choose to access the meeting online Join the online meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82764217575?pwd=aHI4RDhTZ0xiME1HV0ZOcHRxSHZ3OT09>

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor McDonald.
- II. **Opening Ceremonies**
  - A. *Roll Call:*
    - a. The following Council and Staff were present with electronic access available for guests: Mayor T. McDonald, Councilman P. Miller, Councilman J. Mertz, Councilman E. Dugan, Town Manager A. Mangeri, Town Clerk A. Tantillo and Financial Officer J. Helms.
  - B. *Pledge of Allegiance:* Skipped for Electronic Meeting
  - C. *Recognition of Visitors:* No visitors present.
  - D. *Announcements:* None
- III. **Additions and Deletions to published Agenda:** None
- IV. **Approval of Minutes**
  - A. Approval/ Rejection of Council Minutes from the January 6, 2021 Town Council Meeting: *CM Miller motioned for the approval of the minutes as presented, CM Dugan seconded the motion. (Vote: Dugan- Yea, Mertz-Yea, Miller-Yea)*
  - B. Approval/ Rejection of Minutes from the January 6, 2021 Town Council Meeting Executive Session: *CM Dugan motioned for the approval of the minutes as presented, CM Mertz seconded the motion. (Vote: Dugan- Yea, Mertz-Yea, Miller-Yea)*
- V. **Mayor's Report:**
  - a. Mayor McDonald provided a notice to Town Council that a Board of Adjustment Public Hearing will be held on 2/17/2021 at 6 p.m. to review a variance application.
- VI. **Reports**
  - A. State Police:
    - a. Council requests Lt. Lloyd to provide a status report on Delaware State Police activities at the next Council Meeting.
    - b. CM Mertz and CM Dugan requested Lt. Lloyd to provide an annual report on 2020 Crimes and Activities from State Police.
    - c. CM Miller also requested that extra duty patrols are scheduled for the mornings, as he often sees speeding through Town.
  - B. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III:
    - a. Council requested to hold an Executive Session at the next Town Council meeting, regarding an ongoing legal issue. TM Mangeri and TA Townsend will update Council during an Executive Session at the next Council meeting.
  - C. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo:

- a. Council requested that Town Engineer Van-Otoo hold a discussion on the Town projects at the next Town Council Meeting.
  - b. CM Mertz mentioned a Code Enforcement question regarding drainage issues. TM Mangeri requested the addresses of the houses with drainage issues to address the concerns.
- D. Town Manager Anthony S. Mangeri:
- a. TM Mangeri will have a report on the conversations with MS Development at the next Town Council meeting, during Executive Session.
  - b. The Town has been doing well regarding meeting resident's needs. TM Mangeri drove through Town and reviewed some concerns which were addressed with residents.
  - c. CM Mertz had a question regarding Code Enforcement and neighbors with Go Karts and dirt bikes on public space still owned by developers. He asked what residents should do regarding this. TM Mangeri advised that yes, these were illegal activities and residents should be advised and encouraged to contact Delaware State Police.
  - d. CM Mertz also requested information about Church Bells in accordance with the Town's Noise Ordinance and if they have any exceptions to the Noise Ordinance. TM Mangeri advised, yes, the Town does have a Noise Ordinance and has not had complaints regarding the church.
  - e. TM Mangeri discussed with Council that he and FO Helms have been in contact with New Castle County to negotiate the door access control system, that may not be covered by CARES Funds, but is still going to be pursued per Council's direction, as they knew this may not be covered, but still needed a security lock on Town Hall. The Town will proceed with the work but may not receive CARES funding.

**VII. Committee Reports**

- A. Finance: Chair Mayor Thomas McDonald - Co-Chair CM Edgar Dugan
  - a. Mayor McDonald and FO Helms shared that Town Auditors will be available at the next Town Council meeting to present the audit report and field and questions Council may have.
- B. Human Resources: Chair CM Patrick Miller
 

No report.
- C. Public Works: Chair CM Edgar Dugan - Co-Chair CM Scott Lobdell
  - a. No report
- D. Land Use & Development: Chair CM Scott Lobdell - Co-Chair CM Edgar Dugan
  - a. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote to refer the Planning Commission recommended 2020 Comprehensive Plan to the Office of State Planning for review.
    - i. Mayor McDonald mentioned the maps are not currently updated and they need to be to include Townsend Acres into the Town boundary map. CM Lobdell shared with Mayor McDonald that he will try to update the map with a software he has. If this will not be possible, Mayor McDonald will suggest going to RVE and request TE Van-Otoo and his staff create the maps in digital form in order for them to be updated more easily by the Town Engineer.
    - ii. Mayor McDonald also discussed that he would advise requesting the Office of State Planning review the Comprehensive Plan so far, in order to have feedback from them on what can be done or not, to set the tone of legitimacy for the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

- iii. CM Miller agrees that a cursory review would be beneficial. CM Miller agreed with this.
  - iv. TM Mangeri had previously reached out to the Office of State Planning to request this and will do so again.
  - v. CM Miller reviewed the Comprehensive Plan and the recommendations and made a note that there are many items in the plan that the Town can work towards. CM Miller made a recommendation for Council to review the recommendations and establish timelines to review and make progress towards the recommendations.
  - vi. Mayor McDonald said that Council can do this, but to keep in mind that the Comprehensive Plan is a wish list to be revisited as development and progress is made in Town. Mayor McDonald does not think creating a timeline would be possible, as the Town does not currently know what the goals of future Council's may be.
  - vii. CM Miller agrees that while everything in the Comprehensive Plan may be plausible at this point, there are a number of items Council should be doing and should be worked towards and reviewed for progress.
  - viii. Mayor McDonald advises to meet these goals, Council will need to take on tasks related to the goals. CM Miller advised that this can be completed, and the actions can be taken on by Committees.
  - ix. CM Mertz shares some concerns with CM Miller and would like to have a review by the State Office of Planning as there will still be an opportunity for the State Office of Planning to provide feedback and the public to provide feedback at a future Public Hearing.
  - x. CM Mertz also requested a presentation by the Planning Commission of their recommendations at a future Council Meeting. Mayor McDonald shared that the Planning Commission should get feedback from the State before presenting to Council.
  - xi. TM Mangeri will request a cursory review from the State Office of Planning. Regarding the Comprehensive Plan itself, TM Mangeri advised that the Plan sets an ideology or a vision for the Town. Reviewing and prioritizing specific recommendations and reviewing recommendations with Committees would be a good idea to provide the Committees a focus which could allow the priorities to be a focus of everyone. This could allow for Council and staff to utilize everyone's knowledge to seek grants and other items.
  - xii. Mayor McDonald advised Council and the Public is always invited to Planning meetings to give insight on the Comprehensive Plan or ask questions about the plan.
- b. Mayor McDonald also advised Council that corrections are being looked at to revise Chapter 66, the Zoning Unified Development Ordinance. CM McDonald shared that the Planning Commission is looking for feedback on Chapter 66. The Commission has already received feedback from CM Lobdell and TA Townsend and would like additional feedback from Council.
  - c. Mayor McDonald also wanted to reiterate that the Planning Commission has a schedule and reviews development plans on a quarterly basis, as the Planning Commission has a lot of responsibility on its plate.
    - i. TM Mangeri made note that Townsend Acres has made a request for variance, but the request for variance has been suspended as the Planning Commission has asked per protocol; that the developer goes to the Planning Commission first. Townsend

Acres is scheduled for the next Planning Commission meeting, to present informally their plans and after that conversation, the Town will explore their variance, at a later date.

- ii. Additionally, there is a second variance request, which will be heard on February 17<sup>th</sup>. The notice has been sent to the Middletown Transcript, but items may be delayed going forward to ensure enough time is provided for public notice.
- E. Veterans Committee: Chair CM Patrick Miller - Co-Chair CM Joshua Mertz
    - a. No report
  - F. Public Safety: Chair CM Patrick Miller - Co-Chair – CM Joshua Mertz
    - a. CM Mertz shared that he is working with TM Mangeri to schedule the Town Watch meeting for Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.
    - b. CM Mertz and TM Mangeri shared that 20-30 people were at the last meeting, showing interest. Tm Mangeri shared that he has received feedback since the meeting. TM Mangeri shared that he would like to include Old Town in whatever the Town Watch decides, as they are not represented by an HOA. Tm Mangeri will provide structure and training to all involved. Policies and procedures will be important, through training to ensure success. Due to COVID, training may be difficult, but some training can be completed online.
    - c. CM Mertz shared that representatives from each represented will be needed to take the lead on the Neighborhood Watch in that area. Council can drive the Neighborhood Watch, but a lead will be necessary. CM Mertz will advise at the Meeting that this is needed.
    - d. Cm Mertz shared that at the 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, the slides from the last meeting will be available and Cm Mertz will be asking for a plan development and commitments from residents to assist. CM Miller offered assistance in developing the plan and working with the group.
  - G. Community Relations: Chair CM Scott Lobdell - Co-Chair CM Joshua Mertz
    - a. CM Mertz shared that he is continuing to draft the Town Newsletter and will issue it quarterly, as done in the past.
  - H. Parks & Recreation: Chair CM Scott Lobdell - Co-Chair CM Patrick Miller
    - a. CM Miller shared that the Little Libraries are almost complete, minus decorations. The placement of them throughout Town has been delayed due to COVID and avoidance of creating a gathering place and sanitization requirements. CM Miller would like to begin putting the Libraries up around April.
    - b. TM Mangeri shared that if the virus numbers are still high in April, he would advise continuing to wait until the virus numbers have decreased to 3%- 5% or even lower. TM Mangeri would like to wait. CM Miller agreed with waiting, TM Mangeri advised that the numbers, since before the holidays has almost tripled at 968 positive cases, looking towards 1,000 cases in the near future. The positivity rate has remained on average over 20% since the holidays and has been as high as 31%. TM Mangeri agrees the Town should be ready to go to place the libraries out once the numbers decrease. CM Mertz mentioned another option could be to place the libraries out with a notice of closure, unstocked.
  - I. National Wildlife Federation Liaison: CM Joshua Mertz
    - No report.

## **VIII. New Business**

- a. TM Mangeri advised the Town Grasshopper is in for repairs with assets available if it is beyond repair, as it has a hydraulic failure. This is a commercial lawn mower.

- b. TM Mangeri provided an updated on the Town's part time maintenance person. He advised that if he is unable to return to the Town by April, the Town may need to hire someone else for this role.
- c. Mayor McDonald received an email from the US Census Bureau on the Boundary Validation Program. TM Mangeri and Mayor McDonald will work on completing this survey.

**IX. Citizens Comments & Participation**

No comments or questions made by citizens, no citizens in attendance.

**X. Adjournment**

Mayor and Council adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

Please note that this is a Council Workshop. The main function is to set the agenda and prepare for the next Town Council meeting. Some business may be conducted by Council if required. The agenda items as listed may not be considered in sequence. This agenda is subject to change to include the addition or deletion of items, including executive sessions.